

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled).

2. (Cancelled).

3. (Cancelled).

4. (Cancelled).

5. (Currently Amended) A decoding method, comprising:

receiving, at a receiver, a sequence of soft QAM symbols;

scoring each bit for a decoding of a received soft QAM symbol by the minimum squared distance from corresponding symbols of the QAM constellation defined by said each bit to the real or imaginary part of said received soft QAM symbol;

de-interleaving said bits subject to said scoring; and

convolutionally decoding, using a viterbi algorithm unit, said de-interleaved bits using results of said scoring.

6. (Cancelled).